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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/737,120	12/17/2003	Takao Shinozawa	246628US-2CONT	6007

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C. IRVIN MCCLELLAND
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

LIN, JERRY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1631

DATE MAILED: 09/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/737,120

Applicant(s)

SHINOZAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Jerry Lin

Art Unit

1631

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5, 7 and 9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 8 and 10-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3 pages: 14/5/06; 3/16/04; 12/17/03
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Species A, claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10-18, in the reply filed on June 26, 2006 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that there is not a serious burden on the examiner. This is not found persuasive because the different species contain different limitations that would require a separate search. Thus an examination of more than one species would be a serious burden on the Examiner.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, and 10-18 are under examination.

Claims 5, 7, and 9 are withdrawn as being drawn to an unelected invention.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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4. Claims 1-4, 6, 8, and 10-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Regarding claims 1, 12, 13, and 14 it is unclear what is meant by "the basis of a relationship" in the last step of each claim. One interpretation is that the homology values are compared to each other. Another interpretation is that the homology values are judged according to some kind of criterion. For purposes of this Office Action, the Examiner will use the latter interpretation.

6. Regarding claims 14-18, it is unclear what is meant by "transaction condition." The specification on page 27 does include an embodiment regarding job offers, however this embodiment does not specifically define the term. The specification also states that the current invention may be applied "to anything as long as the degrees of similarities between data groups each comprising a plurality of data are analyzed." In light of this description, the Examiner will interpret "transaction condition" to include a variety of data, include DNA sequence data.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

7. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

8. Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

In regards to claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10-18, the instant claims are drawn to a mathematical algorithm for determining homology. A mathematical algorithm is non-statutory unless the claims include a step of physical transformation, or if the claims include a useful, tangible and concrete result. It is important to note, that the claims themselves must include a physical transformation step or a useful, tangible and concrete result in order for the claimed invention to be statutory. It is not sufficient that a physical transformation step or a useful, tangible, and concrete result be asserted in the specification for the claims to be statutory. In the instant claims, there is no step of physical transformation, thus the Examiner must determine if the instant claims include a useful, tangible, and concrete result.

In determining if the instant claims are useful, tangible, and concrete, the Examiner must determine each standard individually. For a claim to be "useful," the claim must produce a result that is specific, substantial, and credible. For a claim to be "tangible," the claim must set forth a practical application of the invention that produces a real-world result. For a claim to be "concrete," the process must have a result that can be substantially repeatable or the process must substantially produce the same result again. Furthermore, the claim must recite a useful, tangible, and concrete result in the claim itself, and the claim must be limited only to statutory embodiments. Thus, if the claim is broader than the statutory embodiments of the claim, the Examiner must reject the claim as non-statutory.

The instant claims do not include any tangible result. A tangible requirement requires that the claim must set forth a practical application of the mathematical

algorithm to produce a real-world result. In the instant claims, a sequence is compared to two sequences and a calculation for homology is performed. After the calculation is performed, the claims only indicate a step of determining. However, the claims do not indicate that there is necessarily a result from these steps. Since there is no result, the instant claims do not include any tangible result.

Regarding claim 13, consideration of the "Computer-Related Inventions" section of the MPEP at section 2106, Part IV, subpart B, clarifies that claiming such non-statutory subject matter on a computer medium or in software does not prevent this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. Claims 1, 2, 10, 11-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Park et al. (Journal of Molecular Biology (1998) Volume 284, pages 1201-1210).

The instant claims are drawn to a system wherein two data groups or transaction condition (e.g. DNA sequences) are compared to a target data group or transaction condition (e.g. target or query DNA sequence) and a homology value is calculated between the target data group and the two data sequences and homology determined from the homology values.

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Regarding claims 1, 11-15, 18, Park et al. teach a method wherein a target data group or transaction condition (query DNA sequence) is compared to a first and second group of data or transaction condition (database of DNA sequences) (page 1203, right column, top); wherein a homology value is calculated for each data x or y (a score for each sequence x or y) (page 1203, right column, top); where a homology values are compared to a threshold (cut-off value) (page 1203, right column, top); where the determination of the homology is based from the relationship between x, y and the number of thresholds n (page 1203, right column, top). Park et al. also teach the program product of this method on a recordable medium (page 1204, left column, top).

Regarding claim 2, 16, 17 Park et al. teach that for each sequence, homology is determined if the homology value is greater than the cut-off value (page 1203, right column, top).

Regarding claim 10, Park et al. teach using the BLAST method (page 1203, right column, top).

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerry Lin whose telephone number is (571) 272-2561. The examiner can normally be reached on 10:00am-6:30pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Wang, can be reached on (571) 272-0811. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center at (800) 786-9199.

MICHAEL BORIN, PH.D
PRIMARY EXAMINER



JL